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A  
Free and Impartial Enquiry  
INTO THE  
*Antiquity and Efficacy*  
OF  
TOUCHING  
FOR THE  
Cure of the KING'S EVIL.

Written some time since, in Two Letters:  
The One to Dr. STEIGERTHAHL,  
Physician to his Majesty, Fellow of  
the *College of Physicians*, and of the  
*Royal Society*; the Other to Sir HANS  
SLOANE, Bart. President of the  
*College of Physicians*, and Vice-Pre-  
sident of the *Royal Society*.

Now first published, in order to a compleat  
Confutation of that supposed supernatural  
Power, lately justified in a Pamphlet, inti-  
tuled, *A Letter from a Gentleman at Rome,*  
*to his Friend in London, &c.*

To which is added,

A Collection of Records.

By WILLIAM BECKETT,  
Surgeon, and F. R. S.

L O N D O N:

Printed, and sold by J. PEELE, at *Locke's*  
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[Price One Shilling.]

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FOR THE

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W. W. C.

A Collection of Records

BY WILLIAM BRICKER  
Surgeon, and F.R.S.

LONDON

Printed, and sold by J. P. ...  
[The following text is faint and partially illegible]





TO  
**Dr. STEIGERTAHL,**  
Physician to His Majesty  
King **GEORGE.**

S I R,



HAVE often wonder'd,  
that in so free and in-  
quisitive an Age as this,  
when every one has a  
Liberty of exercising his  
Enquiries with a be-  
coming Freedom, no  
Body has hitherto *candidly* and *impartial-*  
*ly* examin'd into that commonly received  
Opinion, of the Cure of the *King's Evil*  
by the *Royal Touch*; notwithstanding it  
appears to be a Thing of so extraordi-  
nary a Nature, that the bare mention of

It might be thought sufficient to excite one's Curiosity to endeavour to be apprized of every thing that relates to it. For this Reason, I have thought it very well worth my while, to make, with an *Historical Freedom*, a Search into the Truth of this generally received Notion: that if it appear well grounded, I might have the agreeable Satisfaction of not having acquiesc'd in it without a strict Enquiry; or if I should find it *uncertain* or *false*, I might learn not to rely on the too hasty Determinations of others, which we sometimes find owe their Rise to an unfound or deceitful Foundation. It's true, there have not been wanting Persons among us, for some Ages past, who have been unwilling to give an implicit Consent to the current Opinions of the Times in which they lived, but have suspected the Veracity of it; but no one *hitherto* has thoroughly consider'd the *History* of this Affair, whereby he might be enabled *solidly* to *justify* or *condemn* it. The Reason of this last seems to be principally owing to the great Deference that is generally paid to the *Voice* of the *Majority*, and a certain Indolency of the Tempers of some Persons, which rather disposes them to acquiesce in the Determinations of others, than to be  
at



at the Trouble to examine into the Truth of Things themselves. But not only in this Case before us, but in several others likewise, we ought to look upon an Opinion's being *generally received*, to be extrinsical to its being true or false; for it is not the great Number of Advocates that have appear'd in its Behalf, or those that have transiently written of it as a known Truth, should oblige one to conclude it so; if by examination we find they deliver what they say traditionally, or have not taken care to avoid perverting the most *ancient Authorities*, which in this Case ought most to be depended upon, or foisted in later, which have nothing to support them. And because many Persons ascribe so much to the Power and Efficacy of this Method, that they think it needless to attempt to account for it after any other manner, than acknowledging it to be a *supernatural Gift*; and on the other side, many believe there is very little use in it, from the many Failures of Success, and the great Pains some have been at to support the Credit of it; I determine therefore freely and impartially to consider this Matter from the most authentick Accounts History is able to furnish us with.

with. In order hereunto I have endeavoured carefully to examine all our *English* Historians, in the same Series of Succession in which they wrote, from the very first, who was cotemporary with the Prince first said to be endow'd with this *Gift*, to the present Time, that I might be fully appriz'd of all they have said in relation to it, before I came to any Determination of my own Opinion; as the result of my Enquiries. And this Method I have chose the rather to pursue, that by searching up to the Fountain Head, I might receive what those Authors have deliver'd in their *true* and *proper* Sense and Meaning, and pure and free from Adulteration; which I have since found, by passing through other Hands, have not escap'd being grossly perverted and corrupted, and manifestly apply'd to a very different Use, to what they were originally designed. But before I go about to recount the Particulars that have offer'd to me in my Researches upon this Occasion, I think it necessary to reduce what I have to say, to the Four following Heads, which will, if I mistake not, take in the most material Things that can be said upon this Subject.



1. FIRST, I shall make some Enquiries in relation to the *Antiquity* of *Touching* for the Cure of the King's Evil, and about what Time our Kings did first engage in the Practice of it.

2. SECONDLY, I shall offer some Considerations in relation to its being a *Supernatural Gift*.

3. THIRDLY, In what Particular, as the *Hereditary Right of Succession*, the *Ceremonies*, the *Gold*, &c. its Efficacy is thought most properly to consist. And

4. FOURTHLY, If these should fail of giving full Satisfaction, whether one ought not endeavour to account for the Reason of it, *when it has succeeded*, from some other Cause.

As to the first Particular, I find that our Historians and other Writers, who have mention'd any Thing in relation to this Subject, for Two or Three Hundred Years past, have generally agreed that *Edward the Confessor*, who died in the Year 1066, was the first of our Kings who was so fortunate as to be distinguished by this extraordinary Gift, of *Healing* this Disease: And to support this Opinion, they bring the Authority of *William of Malmsbury*, an Historian who 'tis supposed wrote about Eighty Years after that Prince's Death; and  
quote

quote a Relation out of his History, to confirm the Truth of what they advance. But because I have already declared my Opinion against taking any thing upon Trust, and that the sake of *Truth* was the only Motive that determin'd me to these Enquiries; I shall first faithfully quote what has been thought this Author's Declaration on this Head, and then examine whether it is capable, by any Means, of bearing such a Construction.

Now after he has given us some Account of this *King's Benefactions* to the *Church*, and a Summary of his Virtues, he ushers in the *Miracles*, said to be " effected by him, with relating the  
 " case of a young Woman that had a  
 " Husband about the same Age with  
 " her self, but having no Child, got an  
 " ill State of Health by an over-flowing  
 " of Humours in her Neck, which  
 " broke out in great Nobbs, that she  
 " was *commanded, in a Dream*, to apply  
 " to the King to wash it. To Court  
 " she goes; and the King being at  
 " his Devotions all alone, dip'd his  
 " Fingers in Water, and dabbel'd the  
 " Woman's Neck; and he had no  
 " sooner taken away his Hand, but  
 " she found her self better, the loath-  
 " some



“ Some Scabb dissolv’d, so that *Worms*  
 “ and purulent Matter bursting out to-  
 “ gether, all the noxious Humour  
 “ disappeared; but the Lips of the Ul-  
 “ cers remaining wide and offensive,  
 “ she continu’d at Court till she was  
 “ well, which was in less than a Week’s  
 “ Time; the Ulcers being so well clos’d,  
 “ and the Skin so fair, that nothing of  
 “ her former Disease could be discern’d,  
 “ and in a Year’s Time she was brought  
 “ to Bed of *Twins*.

“ THE same Author likewise informs  
 “ us, that a Man, who was *Blind*,  
 “ spread a common Report at Court,  
 “ that he should receive his *Sight*, if he  
 “ touch’d his Eyes with the Water that  
 “ the King had wash’d his Hands in;  
 “ which the King hearing of, disclaim’d  
 “ any such Power: but his Servants, it  
 “ seems, without the King’s Knowledge,  
 “ while he was at his Prayers, made the  
 “ Experiment, and immediately after  
 “ the blind Man was wash’d with the  
 “ Water, he recover’d his *Sight*. And  
 our Historian tells us, in the same man-  
 ner the King cured a *Blind Man* at  
*Lincoln*.

SUCH sort of Narratives as these are  
 very frequently to be met with in the  
 Writers about that Time; for every body  
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that is acquainted with the *English* History, knows how customary a thing it was for the *Monks*, in those early times, to bestow their Miracles very liberally upon those Persons who had been their Benefactors. And such was the Credulity of those early Ages, that those of the grossest Nature were impos'd upon the People for Matters of Fact; and little less than Heresy wou'd it have been, for any one to have call'd in question or suspected the Truth of them. But Interest was the Motive, that certainly push'd them on to the Invention of such monstrous Accounts as their Writings are stuffed with; and I doubt not but these Relations will gain as much Credit with the Reader, as that of the same King's carrying a poor Cripple upon his Back, stock'd with a whole Hospital of Diseases, to *St. Peter's Church* in *Westminster*, where he was immediately cured of all his Maladies; or as the same Historians relate, that *St. John the Apostle* appeared to him in the Habit of a Pilgrim, and received a Ring the King made him a Present of, which was afterwards very miraculously returned to him. But lest there should be some Persons who are inclin'd to give more Credit to the *former* of those Relations,

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than *these* now mention'd, which I must confess I see no Reason for, I shall confine my self to the Examination of those miraculous Cures mention'd by *Malmshury*, seeing from them it is our modern Writers would prove, that that *King* enjoy'd a *supernatural Gift* of curing the *King's Evil*. But from those Relations which have been truly stated, it doth not appear to me that this King had any peculiar Power of curing this Disease, nor indeed do they seem to carry the least Colour of Reason that they were design'd to engage us to believe so; for if they had, it would have most certainly been particularly express'd. Here is only a transient Account of some miraculous Cures, said to be effected by him; but no mention made of his being peculiarly endow'd with a Power to cure any *particular Malady*: And most certain it is from those Accounts, that one might with as much Reason call *Barrenness* and *Blindness* the *King's Evil*, as such Swellings on the Face; seeing the Power of curing was not confin'd to any distinct Disease, but is said to extend to those before mention'd *equally alike*. Besides this, we never observe that those scrophulous Swellings that go under the Denomination of the *Evil*, have any Worms

in them; which being no Characteristick of those Tumors, must render them of such a Nature, as not to bear an Analogy with the other, and so must make them absolutely *different Diseases*. From hence it evidently appears, that if it were granted, the King had a peculiar Privilege of curing such sort of Swellings *only*, as are mention'd by our Historian, it would be very far from proving he had a Power of curing the *Evil*; forasmuch as there is an *essential Difference* betwixt those two *Distempers*. Doth it seem to carry any appearance of Probability, that while this Author was recording the religious Benefactions of this Prince, and other of his Vertues, he should omit the particular mention of so remarkable a Circumstance, as his miraculously curing the *King's Evil*; more especially if he had been the *first* that had been distinguish'd by this peculiar Favour? For this would have contributed more largely to have commanded a higher Esteem and Veneration of him, than the recital of any thing else he could have said in his Honour. He would not have suffer'd any particular Disease, the King had the *original and supernatural Gift* of curing, to have been barely mention'd with others, without some very effectual

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Mark to distinguish it. But that which seems to shake the Credit of *Malmsbury's* whole Relation of the *Miracles* of this King, is the Silence of *Ingulphus* in this Affair; for this Historian was not only living in this King's Reign, but knew him personally: He gives him a very great Character, recites his Benefactions to the Abbey to which he belong'd, calls him a very pious and vertuous Prince, and wrote not many Years after his Death; but makes no mention of any *Miracles* perform'd by him, nor of his having a Power of curing any *particular Disease*: Which makes it highly probable, these Relations had not their rise so early as his Time; or otherwise it can never be supposed that an Author, that was interested in his Favour, shou'd pass over such a *remarkable Circumstance* without any Notice. Nor does *Marianus Scotus* or *Florence of Worcester*, two Historians that liv'd nearer this Prince's Time than *Malmsbury*, say one Word about his miraculous Cures; which might tempt some Persons to lay a gross Imputation on the last Author's Sincerity. I have been very unwilling to suffer any thing to escape me, that might probably give me any light into this Matter; for which Reason, I have consulted the *Bull*  
of

of *Pope Alexander the Third*, \* by which this King was canonized about Two Hundred Years after his Death, as a very likely Method of discovering the Truth of this *Miraculous Gift*, seeing the Vertues and extraordinary Abilities of those Persons so sainted, are therein usually express'd; but here is no mention made of any peculiar Privilege he enjoy'd of curing any *particular Disease*, nor any thing like it; which makes it very evident, that in that Age they were Strangers to any such Report, and is, as I take it, a convincing Proof of the Error those Authors have committed, who have ascrib'd any such Power to this King. But since it may be objected, that the Authorities I have quoted not being written by those Authors, who design'd to give us a compleat History of the Actions and Affairs of this King, it ought not to be expected, that every memorable Incident of his Reign should be taken Notice of by them, I shall therefore refer my self for farther Satisfaction therein to *Ealred Abbot of Rievaulx* in *Yorkshire*, who flourish'd about the Year 1164. for this Author has written one whole Book of the *Life and Miracles* of this King; and it cannot but with the

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\* See Collection of Records, Numb. 1.



greatest Reason be expected, that if any Author before his Time had mention'd this King's having a peculiar Power of curing any *particular Disease*, or that he had ever heard of it, even by a traditional Report, he would not have fail'd to have made mention of it in such an Undertaking. But on the contrary, he has only transcrib'd the Accounts which *Malmsbury* had before given us with some Variation, and multiplied his miraculous Cures of *Blind Men*, both in his *Life*, and after his *Death* at his Tomb, and of Persons cured of *Agues* and other Distempers, by praying there: But he says not one Word of his having a Power of curing the *Scrophula*, or any other particular Disease; which he can never be supposed to have omitted the mention of, in the Life of a *Prince* to whom he designed to do the utmost Honour.

So that hitherto there seems to be an universal Defect in Authorities, to justify any such Supposition; seeing those Authors from whom one might have reasonably expected an Account of this Affair, are so far from giving us any Assurances of the Certainty of it, that it's evident they were not only Strangers to the *Fact it self*, but likewise to the very *Report of it*. And yet in the Prosecution

tion of this Enquiry we shall find, that in After-Ages a *voluntary*, or at least *imprudent*, *Misrepresentation* of one of those fictitious *Miracles* mentioned by *Malmsbury*, became the original Source from whence this generally received Opinion sprung.

W H O those Persons were that first interested themselves in this Matter, so as to engage the People to believe the Certainty of this *Supernatural Power*, may be readily conjectured, if we do but consider, that the *Clergy* were the Persons in that Reign whom the King studied principally to oblige; so that the many and extraordinary Things expressly related or intimated to be done by him, must be look'd upon to be but as so many necessary and becoming Returns for the signal Favours they had before received. Thus for instance, *Petrus Blesensis*, at that Time Arch-Deacon of *Bath*, who from his condoling the Death of *Thomas*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, and some other Circumstances, may be supposed to have written his Epistles about the Year 1180, writing to the Clergy of the King's Court, and building in all probability on that Relation in *Malmsbury* of the Swellings on the Woman's Face, which bore some external *Resemblance*



to the *Scrophulous Tumors*, tells them, our *Kings* have a Power of curing the *Scrophula*; which, by the way, there would have been no Necessity for him to have mentioned, if it had been ever practised, because they must have been much better acquainted with it, who resided upon the Spot, than he who lived at such a distance from Court. However, this being delivered by a Person of a distinguished Character in the Church, in process of Time it gained so much Credit, that at length it was most certainly put in Practice; for in the *Computus Hospitii* of *Edward the First*, preserved among the Records in the *Tower*, I have frequently seen it mentioned, with the small Sum of Money the King gave his Patients at their Departure. From hence we may readily see what unwarrantable and false Foundations those Princes have built upon, to support the Authority of engaging in such a Method; which, tho' they have had no justifiable Right to, some of them have been \* *so fond of embracing*. One might in this Case have reasonably expected that King *Edward*

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\* See Collection of Records, Numb. 2,

the *First*, in or about whose Reign it seems originally to have been brought in use, should have had, if he was really the first that practised it, the most certain and infallible Assurances, that such a *divine Gift* had been affixed on one of his Predecessors, who had a Power of transmitting it down to him, before ever he should have engaged in a Matter of such a Nature; and have had much better Authority for the putting it in practise than the bare Intimation of such a Thing, deduced originally from a *forged Miracle*; which, provided it had been true, as there is no Reason in the World to believe it, has no Manner of Relation to the authorizing any such Practice or Concernment about any such Disease as is at this Time called the *King's Evil*. *Bollandus*, the Jesuit, has given us three very good Rules, whereby we ought to judge of History in general, but with a more particular Regard to the Credit of such as have written the Lives and Miracles of Saints and Martyrs.

THE first Degree of Credit, says he, is due to such as wrote the Lives of Men they knew, and saw, and lived withal.

THE second Degree of Credit, is due to such Authors as wrote not what they



they saw themselves, but what they received from such as were Eye-witnesses.

THE third Degree of Credit, is due to such as wrote what those People told them, who said they had it from such as were Eye-witnesses.

BUT our Author, who gives us the first Intimation of any of our Kings being invested with such a divine Gift, is quite out of the Rules laid down by that learned Father ; he wrote not within 100 Years of the Death of *Edward the Confessor* ; nor does he cite any Authority before his Time, to justify such a Supposition. So that from hence we are naturally led to observe, that although neither *Ingulphus*, who was Contemporary with this *King*, those that lived soon after his Time, the *Bull* whereby he was *Canonized*, nor the *Author* who made it his particular Business to write his *Life* and *Miracles*, ever heard of any such Power the King enjoyed, that later Writers have ascribed to him ; yet so incurious was that Age to desire to have any infallible Assurances of the Certainty of what was delivered, that, provided it came from an Authority they in some Measure dar'd not contest, they suffered themselves to be imposed upon after the grossest manner imaginable.

BUT, as I have before expressed my Intentions to examine this Matter *impartially*, I ought by no means to endeavour to suppress any Authority, if any such is to be met with, that might confirm the Certainty of this extraordinary Gift, or contribute to support the Credit of it. This obliges me to take notice of a Passage in Dr. *Plott's Natural History of Oxford-shire*; which, if upon Examination it appears to be true, will do more to confirm the Truth of what I have been speaking of, than any thing else that is to be met with in History. This Author tells us of a Piece of Gold, of King *Edward the Confessor*, found in *St. Giles's Fields*, in the Suburbs of *Oxon*, having *E. C.* the initial Letters of his Name, over the hinder Part of the Head, and Two small Holes through it, as if design'd to be hung on a Ribbon us'd by him in *Touching* for the *Evil*: And after him Mr. *Walker* takes notice of the same Thing, in a Dissertation of his, publish'd in the last Edition of *Cambden's Britannia*. This, I must acknowledge, does at first view carry such an appearance of *Truth*, that to a Person not resolv'd to examine into Things with the strictest Scrutiny, might incline him to acquiesce in Accounts that appear



pear so plausible, and nor in the least suspect the Validity of such Authorities. But then, when we come to consider that none of these Pieces are to be met with in the Cabinets of the Curious, whom it is impossible they should escape if they were in being, seeing there are many who have preserv'd Pieces of the same Age in their Collections, and some of a much more ancient Date likewise; this, I say, must render the Credit of the Relation very suspicious: But that which is sufficient entirely to overthrow it, is what is taken Notice of by Sir *Andrew Fountain*, in his *Numismata Anglo Saxonica & Anglo Danica*, where he has made it very evident, in his Remarks on what *Dr. Plott*, and from him *Mr. Walker* have said in relation to that Piece of Gold, that that Age furnish'd us with no Gold Coins of any sort; and most certain it is, as has been observ'd by *Mr. Camden* in his Remains, and by *Mr. Thoresby* in his *Antiquities of Leeds*, who likewise speaks of this Coin or Medal, that nothing of that Metal, under any such Form, appear'd among us, till the Reign of *Edward the 3d*, which was about 300 Years after the Death of *Edward the Confessor*. Besides this, it evidently appears, this Piece of Gold  
 being

being impressed only on one Side, as well as by the Representation of the Impress, which seems to be intended for the *Virgin Mary Veiled*, that it was originally designed for, and made use of, as an *Amulet*: a Thing commonly practised in those early Times, as well as in After-Ages.

As to the initial Letters on it, they are, as well as the Piece it self, no more than *imaginary*; for real they could not be, since it does not appear he had ever the Title of *Confessor* given him in his *Life-Time*. Thus it plainly appears, notwithstanding the Positiveness of the Expressions in which the relation is laid down, it is so far from proving what that excellent *Naturalist* Dr. *Plott* would design by it; that I wish I could say it had not rather contributed to render him liable to the Censures of those Gentlemen, whose indefatigable Application to these Affairs has furnish'd them with greater Knowledge in that Way, than the Course of his Studies naturally led him to.

THUS having finished my Enquiries in relation to the *Antiquity* of *Touching* for the Cure of the *King's Evil*; and proved from those Historians to whom the Truth was most likely to be known, that



it is of a much more modern Date than some of our later Writers have fixed as its Original; I shall proceed to the second Particular, under which I shall examine whether this Method of Curing ought to be esteem'd a *supernatural Gift*? But since, as I have before observ'd, it can never be made appear that *King Edward the Confessor* ever cured any Person of the *Evil*, and forasmuch as History is absolutely silent as to the first of our Kings that engag'd in this Method, it will be impossible for the Patrons of this Opinion to prove to whom this Power was first given; and yet one might reasonably imagine, if any such supernatural Gift was ever enjoy'd, that the King who first exercis'd so divine a Privilege, should not have wanted an Historian to have recorded a Thing of so extraordinary a Nature. Besides this, I believe our *Divines* would find it a difficult Task to reconcile it with the Decrees of the Divine Wisdom, to give to one Person such a Power, to be handed down to his Successors, and to be exercis'd by them, when it might happen (as History has inform'd us it has) that no Part of the Conduct of the Lives of some of them might be thought sufficient to recommend them to the Privilege of doing *any thing supernatural*.

*supernatural*. So that in reality, as it does not appear who was the first Person that did possess this *Gift*, neither does it appear there was any such supernatural Power given. For although I do not go about to deny that Cures have been sometimes effected by the *King's Touch*, yet it will be perhaps impossible for any Body to prove them *supernatural*, or *miraculous*; forasmuch as a *true Miracle* is presently and compleatly effected: but in these the Cure is always advanc'd by Degrees, and requires a considerable Time to be compleated in. Besides this, if the Efficacy of the Touch consisted in a supernatural Power, all Persons would receive the Benefit of so extraordinary a *Gift*, and we should not have had so many Instances of the Failure of its Success. It may, upon this Occasion, be very well worth while to observe, that the Instances of our Saviour's miraculous Cures, recorded in the sacred Oracles, were of the most extraordinary Diseases; insomuch that some Physicians have affirm'd them to be incurable by the ordinary Methods of *Physick* and *Chyrurgery*, But where any Cures have succeeded upon Touching, those Diseases have had their Essence either in the Blood or other Juices, and so might be cured  
by



by whatever was capable of exciting a brisk Motion of the Spirits and Fluids of the Body, as I shall explain more fully hereafter.

To this I may add, that if this be a supernatural Gift, it must certainly be ordain'd for some very good Ends, either probably to exalt the *Honour* and *Dignity* of the *King*, or for the Use and Service of the People upon whom it is exercis'd: But then this would have been confin'd to the Power of the King only to effect, which we find it has not by many Instances; nor does it appear to have been of any particular Use to the Subject, because more People have died of this Disease in those Reigns when our Kings did touch, than when they did not, as appears by the yearly Bills of Mortality: for when our Kings did not touch, the People sought out for early Helps for their Maladies, whereby great Numbers were cured; whereas when our Kings did touch, they depended so much upon its Efficacy, that they neglected all other Means till their Cases became, generally speaking, incurable; which might naturally lead some Persons to doubt, whether it be strictly justifiable to exercise such a Method, which is so far from being useful or serviceable to the People, that it has been proved to be evidently

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*pernicious and destructive.* But some Persons there have been, who, suspecting the Truth of its being a supernatural Gift, and that it ought not to lay a Claim to any such Character, have had recourse to other Causes, which they have thought sufficient to produce such an Effect.

THUS, according to the Third Head, I have laid down, some have plac'd the Efficacy of the *Touch*, in the *Hereditary Right of Succession*; but this has been several times interrupted, within these 300 Years: yet it does not appear by those Kings that touch'd, that one was more successful than the other; and perhaps it may not be unworthy our Observation, that *Henry 7.* who my *Lord Bacon* takes Notice was a great Observer of religious Forms, seems to have been the first of our Kings that establish'd such a particular Form of Ceremonies, as have been lately used; yet every Body knows, to mention no more Instances, that he was far enough from having an *Hereditary Right*. Others there have been that have confin'd this Gift to the Profession of the *Romish Faith*; but this is readily contradicted, by instancing the contrary in several of our Kings, who have sometimes as successfully cured for the same Reason since the Reformation as before.

Some



Some have been of Opinion, the Success was principally owing to the Sign of the Cross, which was anciently made on the Swellings; Thus, for instance, *Richard Smith*, Titular Bishop of *Calcedon*, says, that *Queen Elizabeth* did not perform the Cure by her own Virtue, but by the Virtue of the Sign of the Cross; yet all her Successors discontinu'd it, till the Reign of *King James the 2d*, when it was again reviv'd and practis'd by him: yet it has never been thought, the Success has been ever the less, for the Disuse of it. Some have thought, the greatest part of the Efficacy consisted in the Ceremonies in general; but these I can prove have receiv'd very essential Alterations within little more than 200 Years, and so have not been the same in different Reigns, which will effectually overthrow that Opinion. And lastly, there have not been wanting a great Number of Persons, who have believ'd that the Gold given at the Time of *Touching*, was more efficacious than any other of the succedaneous Helps, and less liable to exception; but in the Troubles of *King Charles the 1st*, he had not always Gold to bestow, for which Reason, says *Mr. Serjeant Wiseman*, he substituted Silver in its lieu, and often touch'd without giving any Thing.

IT will evidently appear then, from all these Particulars which I have enumerated, as the *Hereditary Right*, the *Ceremonies*, the *Gold*, &c. which have been look'd upon as wholly capable, or at least subservient to the great End of Curing; that there is not one of them, but has insupportable Objections against it: so that when this Method of Curing has succeeded, it must be owing to a quite different Cause than any of those above-mention'd; and to different Principles it must be, we must account for such Alterations as are sometimes brought about by this Method. Not one of the before-mention'd foreign and external imaginary Helps, do we find to be sufficient to produce such remarkable Effects, as sometimes ensue upon this Method of Cure; so that conformable to the

FOURTH and last Head, it must necessarily be some *internal Power or Agent*, that is capable of producing such surprizing Alterations as we sometimes observe. But at the same time, it is absolutely necessary that this internal Principle should be set at Work by some proper Means, that are capable of acting upon it, or such desirable Ends cannot be effected by it. That the Passions of the Mind have a very great Power of producing Alterations



tions in the Body, and that according to the different Determinations of the Blood and Spirits to particular Parts, they have either caused or cured Diseases, we need go no further for Proof than to *Fienus's* excellent Treatise *De Viribus Imaginationis*, where he gives us several very confirming Evidences of it. So that we see the Power of Imagination is capable of causing, as well as curing Diseases, either by proper and agreeable Determinations of the Blood and Spirits, whereby the obstructed Canals may be open'd, and the Juices resume their natural Courses, or by detaching a greater Quantity of Fluids to a sound Part, whereby Nature may become oppress'd, and the Tone of the solid Parts receive a preternatural Distention; of which I know a very remarkable Instance. In those Persons who are affected with *Scrophulous Diseases*, we observe the Blood to be impoverish'd, and to have a very languid Motion; the Chyle is thrown into it in a very dispirited State, the morbifick Particles are long a forming, and strongly combin'd with the Principles of the Blood, and there is scarce Power enough in that Fluid to master them, and apply them to their proper Uses; but when the Spirits are roused by a brisk  
and

and eager Imagination, it will excite a brisk Agitation in the Principles of the Blood, quicken its Circulation, and by attenuating the crude and indigested Particles, dispose them to be thrown off by the proper Secretory Organs. Can it otherwise be supposed, than that when a poor and miserable Creature, prepossess'd with the most eager Thoughts of Relief, shall see the *Royal Majesty* condescend to apply his Hands for the Cure of the Sores and Swellings he is diseas'd with, but that it must procure a fresh Turn to the Blood and Spirits, give the effete and languid Nerves fresh Vigour, excite the intestine Agitation of the Particles of the Blood, and produce an agreeable Alteration in the whole Constitution? That great Numbers of Persons have been cured by the same Means, nay even unassisted by the Solemnity of the *Ceremonies*, and by those who have had nothing of Royal Dignity to plead in their behalf, is evident from the surprizing Effects of the Touching of *Valentine Greatracks, Esq;* of *Affane* in the County of *Waterford*, in the Reign of *King Charles the 2d.* This Gentleman, a Member of the Church of *England*, of great Honesty and exemplary Sobriety, and who always refus'd  
any



any Gratuity for his Performances, cured a prodigious Number of Persons of the *King's Evil*, and other Distempers, in *London*, and elsewhere, by the stroaking with his Hands, as is beyond Contradiction testified by the Honourable Mr. *Boyle*, and other Eye-Witnesses of high Distinction in Church and State, as may be seen at large in Mr. *Greatrack's* Letter address'd to Mr. *Boyle*, and even where King *Charles* the 2<sup>d</sup> himself had fail'd, as appears by the *Philosophical Transactions*, N<sup>o</sup>. 256. But besides this Gentleman, I could \* mention several others taken Notice of in History, of whose Success sometimes in the same way, there is no doubt to be made; among others, the Duke of *Manmouth* is said to have had Success this way, as *Harris's Protestant Intelligencer*, a Paper published at that Time, assures us. But in all the Cases where this Method has succeeded, we are to observe that the Diseases were owing to an Indisposition of the *Fluids*; for where the *Solids* have to any considerable Degree suffer'd a Disorder, neither the *Royal Touch* nor any other has been observ'd to be of any Efficacy; which

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\* See Collection of Records, Numb. 3.

shews,

shews, it is the Power of Imagination that can, without any other Assistance, bring about such desirable Effects, by operating on the Blood and Spirits after such a manner as is before expressed. I need not go further for a Proof of this, than to the Observation of every experienc'd *Physician* and *Surgeon*; and although *Mr. Serjeant Wiseman*, whose Interest it was to speak much of the Efficacy of the Royal Touch, has pleaded so earnestly in its behalf, yet it seems very plain, if the Cure was to be attain'd at so easy a Rate, we should not have had such Numbers apply'd to him for Chyrurgical Helps, and have undergone the painful Methods of Cure by Causticks, Incisions, and Cauterics, as is at large set forth in his Chyrurgical Observations on this Subject.

THERE remains yet one Objection to be answer'd, in relation to the Cure of this Disease by the Power of Imagination; and that is, that *Children* have been cured by the Touch, in whom such an Imagination could not be suppos'd to be serviceable. This has been most particularly insisted upon by *Dr. Heylin*, who says, he has seen great Numbers of them healed: But this he asserts at a  
Time



Time when he was engag'd in a Controversy with Dr. Fuller, upon this and some other Affairs, and to confront his Antagonist, who seems to rely much on the Power of Imagination. But all that I take the Doctor to mean in this Case is, that he has seen them *Touch'd*; for when he speaks of such Numbers, no Body can suppose that he gave himself the Trouble of going so many Miles and so many different Ways, as he must probably have done, to enquire into the Event. And what inclines me the more to believe, that by it we are to understand no more than *Touching*, is because I have often met with the bare *Touching* to be call'd *Curing* or *Healing*. Thus for Instance, when the King at that Time design'd to Touch, it was given out that at such a Time there would be a *Healing*; and Dr. Fuller says, I have seen the King solemnly *Heal*, in the Choir of the Cathedral of *Salisbury*: by which it is impossible he should mean any more than *Touching*. And thus says Dr. Carr in his *Medicinal* Epistles: King Charles the 2<sup>d</sup>, in such a certain space of Time, *healed* 92107, which is the exact Number of Persons he *Touch'd* in those Years, as appears by the Register, preserv'd by the Keeper of his Majesty's Closet belonging

longing to his *Royal Chappel*, for I know from whence he took the Account. Thus it evidently appears, that the Words *Touching* or *Healing* were at that Time synonymous Terms, and where then customarily used to signify the same Thing; and indeed it appears somewhat strange, that while this Matter was in Dispute, and the curing of Children alledged as an Argument against the Power of Imagination, no Body should, upon their own Knowledge, give us one particular Instance of its Success on such Subjects; when Mr. *Wiseman*, and others, had so much Opportunity of collecting such Instances, if they had been to be met with.

It remains then for me to prove, that since it cannot be made appear, there was ever any *supernatural Power* given to any of our *Kings* to cure this Disease; that it was taken up and put into practice without any Authority to justify such an Undertaking; and that there are insuperable Objections against every one of those supposed subservient Helps, in order to the Success of the Touching; that when it has succeeded, it must certainly be owing to the Power of *Imagination*; and that I say something further in relation to its Efficacy, in producing



ducing such Alterations in the Animal Body. I have before refer'd the Reader to an unquestionable Authority for several Instances of its being capable of *curing*, as well as *curing Diseases*; and if in other Cases, where the Essence of the Disease was seated in the Fluids, it has by its Operation on the Blood and Spirits, produced such Alterations as have been succeeded by a perfect Cure; why may we not with the same Reason, suppose it capable of producing the same Effect, when the Juices of the Body have been only contaminated, as they always are at first in this Disease of the *King's Evil*?

NAY, one might with more Reason expect that it should be more serviceable in this Disease than any other, seeing it has been customary to make use of such a Method in order to its Cure, as could not but inevitably rouse the *Imagination* and set it at work, while it was continually employ'd about the Thoughts of a Cure, it first push'd the Person on so eagerly to solicit. These desirable Effects that are the Consequents of the Power of the Imagination, seem likewise in some Measure to be owing to the Animal Spirits; for they being detach'd to the Heart, may put it into such a Disposition,

as may produce a notable Alteration in the Motion of the Blood, and its Passage through the Heart, in Point of Quantity, Celerity, or both; and from this Briskness and Life which is given to the *Blood* and *Spirits*, such an agreeable Alteration as we sometimes observe, must necessarily be brought about. On the contrary, when the same Means are made use of to a Person, who entertains but a suspicious or doubtful Opinion of the Event, or who has but a slender Belief of its Efficacy, and whose Imagination is never warm'd with the Thoughts of Success, that Person will never receive any Benefit by the use of such Means.

BUT the Operation of the Spirits on Matter not being distinctly and adequately comprehensible by us, the Difficulty of reasoning about so uncultivated a Subject, may excuse me from saying more about it, than that in those Persons who have a strong Belief of its Efficacy, such a continual Bent and Tendency of the Mind to the same Thing, may have a far greater Effect, than it could possibly produce by a bare Propagation of it self; for it may so determine the Motion of the *Spirits*, and other active Parts of the *Body*, as to make Multitudes of them act, as if they

con-



conspir'd to perform the same Thing, For an *Animal Body* is not a meer Aggregate of *Flesh, Bones, Blood-Vessels, &c.* but an exquisitely contriv'd and very sensible *Machine*, whose Parts are easily set at work, by proper tho' very minute Agents, which may by their Action upon one another, perform far greater Things than could be expected from the bare Energy of the Principles that first put them in Motion.

MOST certain it is, in the Disease I am speaking of, the Blood abounds with a viscous Juice and moves slowly, it wants that brisk intestine Agitation of its Particles that it ought to have, as a warm Fluid, and such as it enjoys in a sound and hale Constitution, from whence obstructions in the *Glands* and other Evils are wont to arise. But when the Imagination becomes fir'd with the Hopes of a succeeding Cure, the whole Mass of Blood becomes, as it were, irradiated by the Spirits contain'd in it; by which means those Corpuscles that make that Fluid viscous, or roapy, or dispirited, become easily disengag'd from the other Principles it was before blended with; and the whole Mass being put into a more brisk and kindly Agitation, may force open the obstructed *Canals*, help it  
to

to throw off the Heterogeneous Particles, and dispose it to permeate as freely as it ought, those Vessels that constitute the *Glands*, which would scarcely before, or but very sparingly admit of it.

FROM hence it will, I think, plainly appear, that *meer Matter* so disposed, and in such Circumstances as I have before mention'd, will do all that Philosophers are wont to ascribe on such Occasions to *Nature*, without any Knowledge of what it does, or acting otherwise than according to the Catholic Laws of Motion. And that the *Cure* of this Disease I have been speaking of, which from the Method which has been frequently us'd, has been look'd upon to be no less than *Miraculous*, may since it takes up a considerable Time to be effected in, be *sometimes* very successfully brought about by the *meer Mechanical Powers of Matter and Motion*.

I am, S I R,

*With the greatest Respect,*

*Your most humble Servant,*

London,

I lay 15. 1721.

Will. Beckett.



and dispose it to permeate as freely as it  
can, which would scarcely before, or  
but very sparingly admit of it.

From hence it will, I think, plainly  
appear, that water is disposed, and  
in this manner, will do all that Philologists  
are wont to say, and what is necessary to  
know without any knowledge of what

**DISSERTATION**  
**CONCERNING**  
**The Ancient Method made Use**  
**of, for the curing Diseases by**  
**CHARMS, AMULETS, &c.**

**BEING**  
**A Continuation of the former Free and**  
**Impartial Enquiry.**

**IN**  
**A Letter to Sir HANS SLOANE, Bart.**  
**President of the College of Physicians, &c.**

Will Beckwith

DISSERTATION

CONCERNING

The Ancient Method made Use  
of for the curing Diseases by  
CHARMS, AMULETS, &c.

BEING

A Continuation of the former Piece and  
Imperial Edict.

IN

A Letter to Sir Hans SLOANE, Bart.  
President of the College of Physicians, &c.





sterious Things, and were learnt to rely entirely on their Efficacy. Of the Operation of these, without the Assistance of the Imagination, no one can frame such a tolerable Idea, as shall be worthy a rational Enquirer and Lover of Truth to acquiesce in; but others there are, that the Mind finds it self obliged to allow, when it is conversant about them, because they have been so often confirmed by Experience. Of this latter sort, I take to be some particular *Amulets* and *Periaptis*; the Use of which has been so strongly contested for by some Gentlemen, who account for the manner of their Operation from the Principles of the Corpuscular Philosophy. These indeed, if they consist of Substances that are capable of powerfully emitting their Effluvia, may operate on a Substance so permeable as that of a Humane Body, and produce very notable Alterations in it; tho' some of these there are that have been used for the Cure of Diseases, which have been so compact and close in their own Nature, that when an actual Heat has been excited in them by rubbing, have not been observed to emit their Effluvia in any considerable Quantity.



On the Operation of these we may perhaps have some indistinct Apprehensions, which may in some sort make us understand our selves and one another when we speak of them; tho' when we consider justly what we say, we may find that our Words are not accompanied with clear, distinct and symetrical Conceptions of those abstruse Affairs we speak of.

BUT the making use of *Charms* for the Cure of Diseases, is the Subject I now design principally to treat of; forasmuch as it has been an ancient Practice among us, and being at this Time in a manner entirely laid aside and forgot, somewhat of the History of such Practices may not only be entertaining, but useful, by discovering the Improvements the Science of Physick has received, since the entire Abolition of Monckery in this Kingdom. There was scarce a Disease that the Humane Body is liable to, but the *Romish* Church had either a Saint, a Charm, a Relick or a \* Blessing to encounter with and subdue it; they had Charms for the Head-ach, the Tooth-ach, the Falling Sicknes, for sore Eyes,

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See Collection of Records, Numb. IV.

for the Chin-Cough, and innumerable others; and they tell you, if you read a Charm in the *Romish Church* on *St. Blaze's Day*, and called upon God and remembered *St. Blaze*, it would be attended with some very extraordinary and surprising Effects. Nay, they had likewise Blessings † for particular Substances to Cure Diseases, as well as Blessings for the Cure of particular Diseases themselves. And they inform us, that many of their particular Saints had a peculiar Privilege of curing some sorts of Diseases, if Prayers were directed to 'em under the Patients respective Exigencies. Thus *St. Margaret* was to be prayed to for Children, *St. Rochus* against the Plague, *St. Petronilla* against the Tooth-ach, and others against other Diseases. They had likewise several superstitious Opinions of the Physical Helps they were to receive from particular Relicks. Thus the Belt of *St. Guthlack*, and the Felt of *St. Thomas of Lancaster*, were accounted sovereign Remedies for the Head-ach; the Penknife and Boots of *Archbishop Beckett*, and a Piece of his Shirt, were in high Esteem by Women

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† See Collection of Records, Numb. V.



with Child ; and the Coals that roasted *St. Laurence*, and the Paring of *St. Edmund's Nails*, were held in superstitious Regard : and *Richard Conway* tells us, the Girdle of *Campion* the Jesuit, who was executed at *Tyburn* for Treason in the Reign of *Q. Elizabeth*, wrought divers miraculous Cures. All which, I am perswaded, would with as much Difficulty be credited by us in this Age, as that ridiculous Antidote mentioned by *Pierius* in his Hieroglyphicks against the Sting of a Scorpion ; which is, for the Patient to sit on an Afs with his Face to the Tail ; for by this Means the Pain was to be transmitted from the Man to the Beast : Or, that the fourth Book of *Homer's Iliads* should be laid under the Patient's Head, to cure a Quartane Ague ; which *Sammonicus*, a Poetical Physician, recommends in these Words, *Mœonia Iliados quartum suppone tementi.*

BUT besides these before-mentioned Methods of Curing, there were still several others to preserve them from Bodily Dangers, as well as the curing Diseases ; these used to be suspended about the Necks of those Persons who expected Service from them, and were looked upon to be a sort of *Holy Amulets* ; many

ny of these I have met with, which consisted of some Text of Scripture, as the Beginning of the Gospel of St. *John*, &c. These pious Sentences they imagined carried with them such a secret Power and Energy, that they were not only Securities against Casualties that might happen to them; but that Diseases could not withstand their Force, but were by that Means entirely subdued and overcome. Thus says our Countryman, the Learned *Cambden*, in his *Remains*, the *Rose Nobles* of *Edward the Third*, which had on one side the King's Image in a Ship, had on the Reverse this religious Inscription, *Iesus autem transiens, per medium eorum ibat*; which they carry'd about them as an *Amulet*, to perserve them from Dangers in *Battle*. And thus the pious Sentence on the Reverse of the Pieces of Gold, suspended about the Patients Neck at the Time of *Touching*, was without doubt originally looked upon to have as great an Efficacy against the Patients Disease, as other *Amulets* of the same Nature in other Cases.

As a farther Confirmation that this was certainly the original Cause of the Gold's being introduced upon such Occasions, we are to observe, that it does not appear that the Use of the Gold was  
 esta-



established before the Ceremonies of  
*Henry the Seventh*, in which its Man-  
 ner of being used is directed; for be-  
 fore that Time, I cannot find it was ever  
 so much as mentioned upon such Occa-  
 sions. 'Twas in regard to the pious  
 Inscriptions their Coins generally bore  
 at that Time, that recommended their  
 use in such Cases, and not any inherent  
 Virtue in the Gold it self or the Impress;  
 for scriptural Sentences were then looked  
 upon to have the same Power, were they  
 either written and suspended about the  
 Patient's Necks, or impressed on a Coin,  
 and used after the same Manner. The  
 Pieces of Gold that were first used  
 upon this Occasion, were not Coin'd  
 particularly for this Purpose, as those in  
 later Reigns have been; but were only  
 the current Coin of the Kingdom,  
 which they called an *Angel Noble*,  
 from an Angel's being impressed on  
 one Side of the Piece, and because it  
 was made of the noblest and purest  
 Gold. The Inscription on its Reverse,  
 to which was attributed so much Efficacy,  
 was, it seems, afterwards altered;  
 and I find in the Reign of Queen *Eli-  
 zabeth*, the Inscription on the *Rose Nobles*,  
 given at the Time of *Touching*, was, *A  
 Domino factum est istud & est mirabile in  
 oculis*

~~public affairs~~, but after her Reign, when  
 this Method of *Touching* grew more in  
 Repuce, (for Q. *Elizabeth* for some time  
 altogether declined it) and People flock-  
 ed in greater Numbers, in push'd on by an  
 eager Belief of receiving Cures of their  
 Maladies; and some, as the Writers in  
 those Times tell us, for the Sake of the  
 Gold only; it was thought fit to reduce  
 it to a much less Bulk, and so conse-  
 quently Value: Then 'twas that the for-  
 mer Inscription being too long to be im-  
 pressed on one Side of so small a Piece,  
 it was altered to *Soli Deo Gloria*, which  
 has been the Inscription in several pre-  
 ceeding Reigns. So that we find, if  
 great Regard was had to the original Ce-  
 remonies that were instituted; or to the  
 Inscription on the Gold first used, both  
 these have received such Alterations as  
 to become extremely different from those  
 establish'd in their first Institution: Which  
 might incline one to think, that in the  
 subsequent Reigns, tho' it was thought  
 proper to keep up the *Solemnity* and *Mag-  
 nificence* of the Method, they suspected  
 the Power and Efficacy the Ceremonies  
 and Inscriptions were originally believed  
 to have, or they would never have suf-  
 fered them to have undergone such essen-  
 tial Alterations. But it has not fared so  
 with



with the Impress; for this has been continued in several Reigns since the Alteration of the Inscription, lest there should be some inherent Virtue in that, which was at first only casual, and might have been different according to the Coin, which might have been substituted in its stead. Thus we see that the Inscription, which first recommended it to the Use it was apply'd to, and which was then believ'd to have so great an Efficacy, has been entirely laid aside; while the Impress, which they had no regard to at all, has been continued as long as any of these Pieces were in Use.

I AM inclined to believe, that this Opinion of the Efficacy of Scriptural Sentences was deduced originally from the Custom of the *Jews* wearing their *Phylacteries*, which were some Parts of the Law of *Moses*, on different Parts of their Bodies, which our Expositors term Preservatives or Charms. However, certain it is, these holy *Amulets* were anciently very much in Use among us, as well as other Nations. St. *Chrysostome* informs us, it was the Practice of some Persons to suspend a small part of a Gospel about their Necks, thinking thereby to secure themselves from Dangers, and cure them of Bodily Infirmities.

ties. And this Practice both he and *St. Augustine* expose under the Names of *Magical Arts* and *Incantations*. These sort of holy *Amulets* being esteem'd at that Time capable of curing Diseases, if it chanced the Cure did succeed where they were used, they might reasonably be looked upon to have a share in it, as well as the *King's Touch*; which naturally leads me to a Consideration of the *Ceremonies* used at the Time of Touching; and that I make some Enquiry, whether there were in those Times, any such Forms as those made use of for the Curing of Diseases, or the contributing thereto. For if the Kings of *England* had a supernatural Power of curing any particular Malady by the bare Touch, there would be no Necessity of introducing any external Assistances of any sort; but if Experience should prove the Uncertainty of it, they who practis'd it would be necessarily obliged to take in all the Helps they could to support the Reputation of it.

I have before observed, that *Henry the Seventh* was the first of our Kings who introduced the Use of the Gold, and the *Ceremonies* upon this Occasion; and this not perhaps because he was, as my Lord *Bacon* observes, a strict Ob-  
server



server of religious Forms, but to render  
 this Method of Cure the more effica-  
 cious; and so by surpassing the Success  
 of the bare Touch, and one single Bene-  
 diction of any of his Predecessors,  
 strengthen his Title to the Crown, which  
 he knew was at best but precarious. He  
 might be very sensible of the many Fai-  
 lures of Success this Method is attend-  
 ed with, and so endeavour by these  
 Means to render it the more efficacious,  
 and make both himself, and it, the more  
 esteemed. But then who must take up-  
 on them the compiling a *Form of Cere-*  
*monies entirely new*, which were to assist  
 in a Cure they were not certain it would  
 contribute any thing to; it's more pro-  
 bable they would have recourse to some  
 approved *Ceremony*, if any such thing  
 was to be met with, that had been thought  
 efficacious in removing bodily Infirmi-  
 ties.

Now it's certain they had at that  
 Time, and long before in the *Romish*  
*Church*, particular Forms compiled of  
 certain Parts of the Scripture, Prayers,  
 and mysterious Expressions, which they  
 termed *Exorcisms*, or *Conjurations*; these  
 were to dispossess the Devil, to disperse  
 evil Spirits that possessed the Bodies of  
 Men, Women or Children, and to cure

some particular Diseases; and no Body could doubt sure, but if one of these Exorcisms had Power sufficient to dispossess the Body of evil Spirits, but that it might be thought much more capable of removing bodily Diseases. Besides, the approved Use of these Exorcisms might be thought sufficient to recommend them so far as to be copied after, since those that used them would not fail of setting forth their Virtues at large. Thus, I am of Opinion, shall we find it to have fared with the Ceremonies of *Henry the Seventh*, first used in the Touching for the *King's Evil*; they seem, with very little Alteration, to be copied from \* a very old Manuscript Exorcism made use of for the dispossessing of evil Spirits, which I find was printed very early; and since that in the *Thesaurus Exorcismorum atque Conjuratum Terribilium*; you will there find the Gospels the same, many of the Expressions the same, and the whole bare such an Analogy, as I think no one can imagine but that one was little else but a Copy from the other.

I have taken care in the *Appendix*, among the *Collection of Records*, to give

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\* See Collection of Records, Numb. VI.



the whole of the one and the other, that  
any one, by comparing them, may rea-  
dily see what a Similitude they bare to  
each other. So that from hence it ap-  
pears to be very evident that these Ce-  
remonies, which have not failed of being  
highly applauded and extolled, and by  
Dr. Heylin termed sacred Ceremonies, were  
originally copied with little Alteration  
from an ancient Romish *Exorcism* or *Con-  
juration*. It's true \* *the original Ceremo-  
nies of Henry the Seventh* have received  
some particular Alterations † *in some sub-  
sequent Reigns*, to make them the better  
comport with the Principles of those  
Times; but still not such most certainly  
as, considering their Original, might have  
been thought sufficient to have entitled  
them to a place in some Editions of our  
*Common Prayer Book*. Thus we may  
see how the Original, the Progress, and  
the Supports of this *supposed divine Gift  
of Healing*, were nothing more than Im-  
positions on the People; and that the  
more it be enquired into, the more its  
Mysteries will be exposed and set in a  
clear Light; and this will make it evi-

\* See Collection of Records, Numb. VII.

† See Collection of Records, Numb. VIII.

dent also, that *Truth* has its inherent and unalterable Marks and Characters, while false Representations and unwarrantable and deceitful Collusions, though they may prevail for a time, will never be able to secure a constant Adherence to Falshood and Error. The one, the more it be enquired into, displays it self with fresh Beauties to an inquisitive Person, and charms the Passions of the Discoverer; while the other, for a Time, sculks under the Subterfuges which were at first established to gain it Esteem, till the inquisitive and penetrating Mind dislodges it from all its Securities, and exposes it with its feeble Supports, till it entirely vanishes and appears no more. And, as I take it, though Truth may for some Time suffer and lie concealed, yet the clearing up of obscure Affairs and the setting them in a true Light, is the only way to dissipate the Clouds that darken it, and making it shine the more triumphantly, to the overthrowing of Error. But whether it proceeds from our being too much inclined to a strict Adherence to the Sentiments of our Predecessors, or our Unwillingness to call in Question any current Opinion that has obtained the Sanction of the common Consent of Mankind, most certain it is, we do not,

gene-



generally speaking, engage in these Enquiries with that Vigour and Alacrity that seems to be necessary, and which when once compleated, affords a Pleasure which is a sufficient Recompence for all our Trouble. This we might have imagined no one should have been unwilling to have engaged in, where the Subject appeared at first view to be *more mysterious than rational*; for such Affairs are very rarely found to be able to stand the Test of a strict Enquiry. Besides this, where such a Method has been treated on, and the highest Elogiums given it by those Persons whose *Interests or Passions* led them to speak in its Favour; this, as well as the extraordinary Nature of the Thing it self, might have been Cause sufficient for one to have enter'd one's Suspicion concerning it. Thus shall we find it to have fared in this Case, which I have had under Consideration; not one of those Persons *who have written expressly of it*, but have been biased by their particular Interests to speak in its Favour; and what dependance can we have on those Authors, who had not so much the sake of Truth in view, as a particular regard to their own Profit, by flattering the respective Princes, in whose Reigns they wrote? But the indiscreet Mea-

Measures that some particular Persons have made use of, ought not to prejudice Truth, which must not be cast away with the unwarrantable Conceits that some have pinn'd upon it.

THAT the Reader may have some Idea of the Performances of all those Authors I have been speaking of, I shall give some Account of them and their Writings on this Head; whereby will be represented what Obligations they were under to pursue the same Design, and what were the Motives to dispose them to forfeit the Character of impartial Writers. The first who engaged in this Affair was

Dr. *William Tooker*, sometime Chaplain to Queen *Elizabeth*, afterward Canon of *Exeter*, the Place of his Nativity, and at length Dean of *Litchfield*. This Author in 1597, while he was the Queen's Chaplain, published his *Charisma sive Donum Sanitatis*: In which Book he flatters her Majesty upon her extraordinary Abilities in curing the *Evil*. And the more to advance the Dignity of this Method, seems to be displeased with those that fix'd it upon *Edward the Confessor*, as the first who exercised it; and would carry it up as high as *Lucius*, by some said to be the first of our *Christian Kings*; but he brings not the least Authority to support any such Supposition. THE



The next Person that appeared upon this Subject was *William Clowes, Esq;* a Native of *Warwickshire*, who, in regard to his great and long Services, and remarkable Success in his Practice in his Military and Naval Expeditions, had a Grant of Arms in 1576, and sworn one of the *Surgeons to Queen Elizabeth*, in the latter End of her Reign. This Gentleman in 1602, published his *Right fruitful and approved Treatise of the Struma, &c.* In which Book he complements her Majesty on the effecting a Cure upon a scrophulous Person, which he judged to be more Divine than Humane, and believes, upon the Failure of all other Methods, that Patients may expect Relief from her. But certainly the Recital of one of the Queen's Cures was as little as he could well do, when he mentions so many of his own; and I believe there would have been but little Occasion for his Book, which gives us the Physical and Chyrurgical Methods of Cure, if the Success of the Touching, which for a considerable Time together she wholly declined, had not been so very precarious.

SUBSEQUENT to *Clowes*, tho' at many Years distance, was one *John Bird*, sometime a Resident at *Sion College in London*, who, to shew his Zeal for his Majesty,

the Year after the Restoration, published his *Ostentat Carolina*. It contains a great many odd and whimsical Opinions, as that our dear Lord King Charles is the Antitype of Edward the Confessor; and that he is the last of our Kings that shall heal the King's Evil: That the King had likewise a Power of Curing the Rickets; which Disease, through the Mercy of God and his Means, should seize no more Children, but entirely vanish and appear no more. And such sort of enthusiastick Notions, which fill his whole Book.

FOUR Years after this Dr. Thomas Allen, sometime of Caius College in Cambridge, afterward Physician in Ordinary to King Charles the Second, published a Treatise of the Cure of the Evil by the Touch, which he entitles, *The Excellency or Handy-work of the Royal Hand*, dedicated to the Duke of York. The whole Book is principally a Declamation on the Miseries of the Rebellion and an Incentive to the Love of his Majesty, for submitting to Touch so many deplorable Objects for the Cure of the King's Evil, and to dissuade Persons from applying themselves to the *Seventh Sons*, or those called *Strokers*, who it seems, if any of them chanced to succeed, were thought



to lessen the Esteem of his Majesty's Performances. But Mr. Greatracks Reputation very much increasing at this Time, although he is not mention'd in the Book, it seems to be more particularly calculated against his surprizing Successes.

IN 1676, Richard Wiseman, Esq; a Native of Cambridgeshire, one of the principal Surgeons in King Charles the First's Army, and after the Restoration, his Majesty's Serjeant Surgeon, published several Chyrurgical Treatises, one of which entirely treats of the King's Evil. In the first Chapter he pleads very strongly in behalf of the Efficacy of the Touch; although in the Body of his Book, he gives us a great Number of Instances of Persons cured by himself, by proper Physical and Chyrurgical Processes, who, it's probable, would not have submitted to his painful Methods, if the Cure was attainable at so easy a Rate as the bare Touch.

AFTER him John Brown, a Norfolk Man by Birth, and Surgeon in Ordinary to King Charles the Second, in the Year 1684, published with two preliminary Treatises, his *Charisma Basilicon*, or Royal Gift of healing Strumas, or King's Evil Swellings, by Contact or Imposition of the sacred Hands of our Kings of England

and France, given them as their *Flattery*. Which Book, in the Patent before it, is said to be to the King's great Liking and Satisfaction; but in reality the Body of the Book is nothing else but a Translation of *Tooker's Charisma*, which being even at that Time exceeding scarce, he, I suppose, thought he might securely do it, without having his Plagiarism discovered.

Thus it evidently appears from the Characters of these Writers, that we are by no means to expect an impartial History of this Affair from them, by reason it's very evident they were all of them prepossed in its Favour; their Business was to exalt the Power and Dignity of the Princes under whom they wrote, to influence the Peoples Minds with a Belief, that they were capable of effecting *supernatural Things*; and as there have not been wanting some who have, without Reason, believed that God has bestowed upon all Kings some particular Character or Gift, to shew how peculiarly he's concern'd for them; so their Business was to inculcate a Belief of such Things, the more to raise the Peoples Veneration and Esteem. But as the countenancing of Parasites is an evident Sign of Weakness in a Prince; so  
the



the despising such mean and low Ends to gain Esteem, will always be approved by the wiser Part of the World, and affix on that Prince that does so, a *Character as durable as Time*. I cannot but say, that it's very probable that those Persons who were inclined to an impartial Consideration of this Matter, might have some Doubts arise within themselves concerning it, and suspect whether it might not be looked upon as a very imprudent Undertaking, to go about to disprove an Affair of this Nature, when it was countenanced by a Royal Sanction. Thus when Peoples Minds were so strongly prepossed in Favour of any of our Kings being invested with so *Divine a Gift*; that they exercised it for the Good and Relief of their Subjects; and that it was a Power peculiarly affixed to the Crown; were this even by uncontested Authorities brought against it to be suspected, precarious or false, it would be immediately adjudg'd to be a bold and daring Undertaking, and striking at the Royal Prerogative. For such has been the Depravity of some former Ages, that a Freedom of Thought has been misconstrued as a Design to bring about some sinister Ends; and a Person inclined to curious Enquiries might prove dangerous

to

to the State, by discovering some dark and mysterious Things, and by placing Truth in a clear Light, contribute to weaken the Supports of the Government.

BUT if I have made it appear in the foregoing Papers, that there is nothing supernatural in it, and that it never was peculiarly affixed to the Crown, as it will be a Proof of the over Credulity of some of our Kings, so it will redound much to the Honour of some others, who, suspecting the Authorities of prejudiced Persons, have altogether declined the Exercise of it.

BUT happy is it for us now, that our Minds are free from these Incumbrances; an unrestrained Freedom of Thought, and a right Method of Reasoning, are become the happy Characters of this Age; and as we have learn't not to suffer our Senses to be imposed upon, so we likewise have to reduce every Thing to the Standard of Truth.

Thus have I examined this Affair with all the Candor and Impartiality I have been capable of; I have taken it in all its respective Views, and mentioned the most positive Assertions which have been offered in its Behalf: But upon the whole it appears, that its Supports have been only fictitious, and imaginary,  
and



and such as have disappeared when brought to a rational Inquest; for as Truth never looses by Enquiry, so Falsehood and Error are always the more exposed by it.

I am, Sir,

*With the greatest Sincerity,*

*Your most obliged humble Servant,*

London,

Aug<sup>13</sup> 1711

Will. Beckett.



( 63 )

and they have disappeared when  
looked for to a rational inquiry; for as  
truth and error are always the more ex-  
posed by it.

London, 21 R.

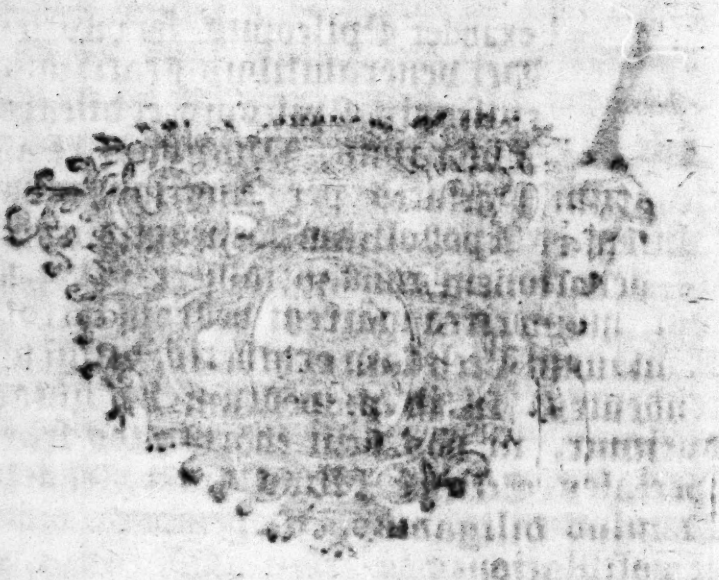
It is the greatest sin.

For my self and family.

London.

Aug. 21. 1721.

Will. Beckett.







A

# Collection of Records

Referred to

In the preceding Papers.

N<sup>o</sup> M<sup>o</sup> B. I.

*The Bull of Pope Alexander the Third, for canonizing King Edward the Confessor,*

**A**lexander Episcopus servus servorum Dei venerabilibus fratribus Archiepiscopis, Episcopis, et dilectis filiis Abbatibus, Prioribus, et aliis Ecclesiarum Prelatis per Angliam constitutis, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Illius devotionem constantiam et fidei firmitatem, quam circa matrem vestram sacrosanctam Romanam Ecclesiam exhibetis, diligentius attendentes, in id propositum voluntatis adducimur, ut vos sicut charissimos fratres, et speciales Ecclesie filios sincera charitate in Domino diligamus, propensius honoremus, et postulationes vestras, quantum cum Deo possumus,

possumus, libenti animo admittamus. Unde  
 atque fuit, quod super petitione, quam de  
 Edvardo glorioso quondam Rege Anglorum ca-  
 nonizando, et in Sanctorum Catalogo adseri-  
 bendo, tam charissimus in Christo Filius noster  
 Henricus illustris Anglorum Rex, quam vos ipsi  
 nobis instantius porrexistis, sollicitam cum  
 Fratribus nostris deliberationem habentes,  
 libro miraculorum inspecto, quæ, dum in car-  
 ne mortali viveret, et postquam de p.æsentis  
 sæculo est assumptus, omnipotens Dominus  
 per suam misericordiam declarabit: Viliis eti-  
 am litteris antecessoris nostri piæ memo.riæ  
 Innocentii Papæ; vestris quoque testimoniis  
 inde receptis: Quambis negotium arduum et  
 sublime non frequenter soleat nisi in solemnibus  
 Conciliis de more concedi; de communi  
 tamen Fratrum nostrorum consilio, juxta vo-  
 tum et desiderium prædicti Filii nostri Regis  
 ac vestrum, corpus ipsius Confessoris ita glo-  
 rificandum censuimus, et debitis præconiis a-  
 dorandum in terris, sicut eundem Confessorem  
 Dominus per suam gratiam glorificabit in  
 Cælis. Unde videlicet inter Sanctos Confesso-  
 res de cetero numeretur, quod hoc ipsum apud  
 Deum signis meruit ac virtutibus obtinere.  
 Quia igitur decet honestatis vestræ prudenti-  
 am eum pie colere, et toto studio venerari,  
 quem auctoritate Apostolica venerandum ve-  
 stra postulabit devotio, et colendum; Univer-  
 sitatem vestram per Apostolica scripta mone-  
 mus et exhortamur in Domino, quatenus eum  
 ita deinceps studeatis debitis obsequiis hono-  
 rare, ut ipsius intercessionibus apud districtum  
 Iudicem mereamini veniam obtinere, et glo-  
 riosum in æterna beatitudine præmium invenire.  
 Datum Anagninæ septimo Idus Februarii,  
 hoc videlicet Anno.



## NUMB. II.

*A Proclamation for the better ordering of those who repair to the Court for the Cure of the Disease called the King's Evil.*

**W**hereas by the Grace and Blessing of God, the Kings and Queens of this Realm, for many Ages past have had the happiness by their Sacred Touch and Invocation of the Name of God, to cure those that are afflicted with the Disease called the King's Evil: And his now most excellent Majesty in no less measure than any of his Royal Predecessors hath had good success herein; and in his most Gracious and Pious Disposition is as ready and willing as any King or Queen of this Realm ever was, in any thing to relieve the distressed and necessities of his good Subjects; yet in his Princely Wisdom, foreseeing that in this as in all other things, Order is to be observed, and at times are necessary, to be appointed for the performing this great work of Charity: His most excellent Majesty doth hereby publish and declare his Royal Will and Pleasure to be; that whereas heretofore the usual times of presenting such Persons to his Majesty for this purpose, were Easter and Whitsonide, that from henceforth the times shall be Easter and Michaelmas, as times more convenient both for the temperature of the Season, and in respect of any Contagion which may happen in this near access to his Majestys Sacred Person, and his Majesty doth accordingly Will and Command, that from the time of publishing this Proclamation,

none presume to repair to his Majesty's Royal Court to be healed of that Disease before the Feast of St. Michael now next coming. April the 6. 1632.

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### NUMB. III.

*The Ceremonies formerly used by the Salutors in Spain, by which, and by the Touch, and the Application of White Linen, they pretended to cure all External Sores.*

**P**ER Christum, et cum Christo, et in Christo, est tibi Deo Patri omnipotenti, in unitate Spiritus Sancti, omnis Honor, et Gloria per omnia secula seculorum. Quem Salutaribus preceptis moniti, et divina institutione formati audemus dicere, Pater noster qui es in Coelis, &c. Amen.

Iesus Potentia Patris, Sapientia Filii, Virtus Spiritus Sancti, Sanet hoc vulnus ab omni malo. Amen.

Iesus, Domine mi Iesu Christe, credo quod nocte Iobis Sancti in Coena, postquam lavasti pedes tuorum Sanctorum Discipulorum; accepisti panem sanctissimis manibus tuis, et benedixisti et fregisti, et dedisti tuis Sanctis Discipulis, dicens accipite et comedite, hoc enim est Corpus meum; similiter accepisti calicem in Sanctissimas Manus, et gratias egisti, et tradidisti illis, dicens, accipite et bibite, quia hic est meus Sanguis Novi Testamenti, qui pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum, hoc quotiescunque feceritis, facite in meam commemorationem: Obsecro te, Domine mi Iesu Christe ut per hac Sanctissima



ma Verba, et per virtutem illorum, et per meritum sanctissimæ passionis tuæ sanetur hoc vulnus, et malum istud. Amen, Jesus.

In Domine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen, Jesus.

At length the following Articles were preferred against them in the Bishop of *Ypres* and other Ecclesiastical and Civil Courts; and these pretended Miracle-Mongers were severely prohibited from farther imposing on the People.

1. Because they are a lewd People, and unlikely to have that Commerce with God they pretend to.

2. Because they are but loose, and unsettled in Religion, and would render others so.

3. Because they made the People tempt God to do that by an extraordinary way of Miracles, which he had appointed to be done in the ordinary way of Means and Whysack.

4. Because they had seduced People to the neglect of the ordinary means of their preservation, to the danger of many Peoples Lives.

5. Because they brought the Curse of God upon poor People, many having confessed, that they perished under the just hand of God, so; having any thing to do with these Saviours.

6. Because they were abetted by desperate Men of dangerous Principles and Practices.

7. Because they took the Name of God in vain, and abused his Word to superstitious Purposes.

8. Because they performed no real or lasting Cures.

9. Because

9. Because they distracted the Peoples thoughts, and prepared them for Diabolical Illusion and Magick.

10. Because many of them could do nothing till they had drank liberally (a Bottle of sack being required to a Miracle) when they pretended that they were inspired.

11. Because they gave occasion to strange Discourses about the Miracles of Christ, and his Followers, and so overthrow the great ground of Faith.

12. Because they perswaded People to do themselves mischief, that they might do Cures.

13. Because there were several instances brought of their Confederacies, Impostures, and Juggles.

In fine, Because they did a World of Mischief, and little or no Good.

#### N U M B. IV.

*A Blessing for Sore Eyes (taken out of an Old MS. Mass Book) very profitable for that Disease, as teacheth Willielmus de Montibus, Chancellor of the Mother Church of Lincoln, put in modern English.*

**T**HE Blessing for Sore Eyes (says he) necessarily bringeth in, and the devotion of them that ask it, and it ought to be done in this manner.

First, the Priest who singeth Mass, after that he hath received the Body and Blood of our Lord, and after the first and second washing of his fingers, shall cause his Parish Clerk



Clerk to pour into his Chalice the third ad-  
lution, not of Wine but of Water, and this  
Water must the Priest in his Chalice reserue  
and keep till Mass be done, and when Mass  
is once done, the Priest before he puts off his  
Sacerdotal Vestments, shall take of this Wa-  
ter and sprinkle it upon the Soze Eyes, and  
he shall say this Prayer following, with  
Dominus vobiscum et cum Spiritu tuo, and  
with Oremus.

### The Prayer.

**O** Lord Iesu Christ, who openedst the Eyes  
of the Man that was bozn Blind, keep  
the Eyes of this thy Seruant, giuing him  
sight clear, sufficient, meet and competent to  
serue thee withal, by virtue of this Sacra-  
ment, and by this Sign ✕ of thy Holy Crosse.

Here let the Priest crosse the diseased Person  
with the Chalice and with the Corporas  
Cloth, and let him so handle the matter,  
that with his crossing he may cause some  
Wine to go from the Chalice and Corporas  
Cloth into the Soze Eyes, while he sayeth,  
In Nomine Patris, Filii, et Spiritus San-  
cti. Amen. Then shall the Priest say the be-  
ginning of St. John's Gospel.

**I**n principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat  
apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum. Hoc  
erat in principio apud Deum. Omnia per  
ipsum facta sunt: Et sine ipso factum est nihil,  
quod factum est: In ipso vita erat, et vita  
erat lux hominum: Et lux in tenebris lucet  
et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt. Fuit  
Homo

homo missus a Deo, cui nomen erat Ioan-  
 nes. Hic venit in testimonium, ut testimo-  
 nium perhiberet de lumine, ut omnes crederent  
 per illum. Non erat ille lux, sed ut testimo-  
 nium perhiberet de lumine. Erat lux vera  
 quæ illuminat omnem hominem venientem in  
 hunc mundum.

These things being done, let the diseased Per-  
 son rise up, kiss the Altar, and offer some-  
 thing to the Blessed Sacrament, and so depart;  
 and undoubredly with the help of God, and of  
 our Blessed Lady, he shall shortly have reme-  
 dy of his Disease.

Num.



## NUMB. V.

The Ceremonies used by King Henry VIII. for Blessing of Cramp Rings, which method, as appears by divers Records which I have seen, was usually practised by our Kings some hundred Years before his time, which Rings they made Presents of to particular Persons. The use of them was it seems discontinued under King Edward VI. but under Queen Mary it was designed to be revived, and the Office for it was written out in a fair Manuscript, of which this is a Copy. That King Henry VIII. practised this Method, we have besides others, the Testimony of Andrew Boorde a Physician, who wrote in his Reign: This Author speaking of the Cramp, says, The King's Majesty hath a great helpe in this matter in hallowynge Crampe Rings, and so geven without Moynay or Petition.

## The Office of Consecrating the Cramp Rings.

Certain Prayers to be used by the Queen's Highness, in the Consecration of the Cramp Rings.

**D**EUS misereatur nostri, et benedicat nos  
Deus: illuminet vultum suum super nos,  
et misereatur nostri.

Ut cognoscamus in terra viam tuam, in  
omnibus gentibus salutare tuum.

Constituantur tibi Populi, Deus; constean-  
tur tibi Populi omnes.

Latentur et exultent gentes, quoniam ju-  
dicas populos in equitate, et gentes in terra  
dirigis.

Constituantur tibi Populi, Deus; constean-

tur tibi Populi omnes, terra dedit fructum suum.

Benedicat nos Deus, Deus noster, benedicat nos Deus, et meruent cum omnes fines terre.

Gloria Patri, et filio et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in secula seculorum. Amen.

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui ad solatium humani generis, varia et multiplicia miseriarum nostrarum levamina uberissimis gratia tua donis ab inexhausta benignitatis tue fonte manantibus, incessanter tribuere dignatus es; et quos ad regalis sublimitatis fastigium extulisti, insignioribus gratiis ornatos, donorumque tuorum organa atque canales esse voluisti, ut sicut per te regnant alii que præsunt, ita te auctore reliquis profint, ut tua in populum beneficia conferant: preces nostras propitius respice, et quæ tibi vota humillime fundimus, benignus admitte, ut quod a te maiores nostri de tua misericordia sperantes obtinuerunt, id nobis etiam pari sollicita postulantiibus concedere digneris. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

The Kings lying in one Bason or more, this Prayer to be said over them.

**D**eus Cœlestium terrestriumque conditor, creaturarum atque humani generis benignissime reparator, Dator spiritualis gratia, omniumque benedictionum largitor, immitte Spiritum Sanctum tuum Paraclitum de Cœlis super hos Annulos arte labili confictos, eosque magna tua potentia ita emundare



pace digneris, ut omni nequitia liberis vene-  
noaque serpentis procul expulsa, metallum  
a te bono conditore creatum, a cunctis inimi-  
ci sordibus maneat immune. Per Christum  
Dominum nostrum. Amen.

### Benedictio Annulorum.

**D**eus Abraham, Deus Isaac, Deus Ja-  
cob, exaudi miserereque preces nostras,  
parce metuentibus, propitiare supplicibus,  
et mittere digneris Sanctum Angelum tu-  
um de Caelis qui sanctificet ✠ et benedicat ✠  
annulos istos, ut sint remedium salutare  
omnibus nomini tuum humiliter implozanti-  
bus, ac semetipsos pro conscientia delictorum  
suoꝝum accusantibus, atque ante conspectum  
Divinae Clementiae suae facinorosa sua deplo-  
zantibus, et serenam animam pietatem tuam hu-  
militer obviareque flagitantibus; pꝛeant deni-  
que per invocationem saluti sui nominis omni-  
nibus istos gestantibus, ad Corporis et Ani-  
mae sanitatem: Per Christum Dominum no-  
strum. Amen.

### Benedictio.

**D**eus qui in morbis curandis maxima  
semper potentia tua miracula declarasti,  
quisque annulos in Iuda Patriarcha ad  
attrahendum, in Aaron Sacerdotale ornamen-  
tum, in David fidelis custodia symbolum, et  
in hoc regno variorum morborum remedia  
esse voluisti, hos annulos propitius ✠ bene-  
dicere et ✠ sanctificare digneris: Ut omnes  
qui eos gestabunt sint immunes ab omnibus  
Satanæ insidiis, sint armati virtute celesti

defensionis, nec eos infestet vel herhorum con-  
tractio, vel comitialis morbi pericula, sed  
sentiant te opitulante in omni morborum ge-  
nere levamen. In nomine Patris et Filii  
et Spiritus Sancti Amen.

Benedic anima mea Domino: Et omnia  
quæ intra me sunt nomini sancto ejus. Here  
follows the rest of that Psalm.

**I**mmensam clementiam tuam Domine,  
Deus humiliter implozamus, ut qua ani-  
mi fiducia et fidei sinceritate, ac certa mentis  
pietate, ad hæc impetranda accedimus, patet  
etiam devotione gratia tua symbola fideles  
prosequantur; facessat omnis superstitio, pro-  
cul abest Diabolica fraudis suspitio, et in  
gloria tui nominis omnia cedant, ut te la-  
gitorem bonorum omnium fideles tui intelli-  
gant, atque a te uno quicquid vel animis vel  
corporibus vere prosit, profectum sentiant et  
proficiantur: Per Christum Dominum no-  
strum. Amen.

These Prayers being said, the Queen's Highness  
rubbeth the Rings between her Hands, say-  
ing;

**S**anctifica Domine Annulos istos, et roza  
tua benedictionis benignus asperge, ac  
manuum nostrarum confricatione, quas olei  
sacri infusione externa sanctificare digna-  
tus es pro ministerii nostri modo, consecra;  
ut quod natura metalli præstare non possit,  
gratia tua magnitudine efficiatur: Per Chri-  
stum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Then



Then must Holy Water be cast on the Rings,  
saying;

**I**n nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus  
Sancti. Amen. Domine Fili Dei unigeni-  
te, Dei et hominum mediator, Iesu Christe,  
in cuius unius nomine salus recte quaritur,  
quique in te sperantibus facilem ad patrem ac-  
cessum conciliasti, quem, quicquid in nomine  
tuo peteretur, in omne daturum, cum certis-  
simo veritatis Oculis ab ore tuo Sancto, quum  
inter homines Ierisababaris homo pronunti-  
asti; precibus nostris aures tuas pietatis ac-  
comoda, ut ad thronum Gratia in tua fiducia  
accedentes, quod in nomine tuo humiliter po-  
lulabimus, id a nobis, te mediante, impe-  
tratum fuisse, collatis per te beneficiis, fideles  
intelligent: Qui vivis et regnas cum Deo  
Patre in unitate Spiritus Sancti Deus, per  
omnia secula seculorum. Amen.

**V**ota nostra qualivimus Domine, Spiritus  
Sanctus, qui a te procedis, aspiRANDO  
præveniat, et prosequatur, ut quod ad salu-  
tem fidelium confidenter petimus, gratia tua  
dono efficaciter consequamur; Per Christum  
Dominum nostrum. Amen.

**M**ajestatem tuam, Clementissime Deus,  
Pater, Filius, et Spiritus Sanctus,  
suppliciter exoramus, ut quod ad nominis tui  
Sanctificationem piis hic Ceremoniis peragi-  
tur, ad corporis simul et animæ tutelam vale-  
at in terris, et ad uberiozem felicitatis fru-  
ctum proficiat in Coelis. Qui vivis et regnas  
Deus, per omnia secula seculorum. Amen.

N u m b.

## N O M B. VI.

*Exorcismus adversus Spiritus immundos.*

**E**xorcista indutus vestibus sacris, pergat ad altare vel ante aliquam Imaginem: Et premissa (ut sapinus dictum est) Sacramentali confessione, corde humiliato et humo, flexis genibus, seipsum signando, dicat.

In Domine Sanctissima, et individua Trinitatis, Patris, et filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

V. Adjutorium nostrum in Domine Domini.

R. Qui fecit Caelum et Terram.

V. Ostende nobis, Domine, misericordiam tuam.

R. Et salutare tuum da nobis.

V. Adjuva nos, Deus salutaris noster.

R. Et propter gloriam nominis tui, Domine, libera nos.

V. Nihil proficiat inimicus in nobis.

R. Et Filius iniquitatis non apponat nocere nobis.

V. Fiat misericordia tua Domine super nos.

R. Quemadmodum speravimus in te.

V. Exurge Christe, adjuva nos.

R. Et libera nos propter nomen tuum.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum Spiritu tuo.

Die Exorcista surgens dicat sequentia Evangelii.

In



**I**n illo tempore: Recumbentibus undecim  
discipulis apparuit illis Iesus; Et ex-  
probavit incredulitatem eorum, et duritiem  
cordis: Quia ipsi, qui viderant eum resurrex-  
isse, non crediderunt. Et dixit eis; euntes  
in mundum uniuersum, predicare Euan-  
gelium omni creatura. Qui crediderit et bap-  
tizatus fuerit, saluus erit: Qui vero non cre-  
diderit, condemnabitur. Signa autem eos,  
qui crediderint, hac sequentur: In nomine  
meo demonia eicient: Linguis loquentur  
nobis: Serpentes tollent: Et si mortiferum  
quid biberint, non eis nocebit: Super Aegros  
manus imponent, et bene habebunt. Et Do-  
minus quidem Iesus, postquam locutus est  
eis, assumptus est in Caelum, et sedet a dex-  
tris Dei. Illi autem profecti, predicauerunt  
ubique, Domino cooperante, et sermonem con-  
firmante, sequentibus signis.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum Spiritu tuo.

**I**n principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat  
apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum. Hoc  
erat in principio apud Deum. Omnia per  
ipsum facta sunt: Et sine ipso factum est nihil  
quod factum est: In ipso vita erat, et vita  
erat lux hominum: Et lux in tenebris lucet,  
et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt. Fuit  
homo missus a Deo, cui nomen erat Ioan-  
nes. Hic venit in testimonium, ut testimo-  
nium perhiberet de lumine, ut omnes crede-  
rent per illum. Non erat ille lux, sed ut te-  
stimonium perhiberet de lumine. Erat lux  
vera quae illuminat omnem hominem venien-  
tem in hunc mundum. In mundo erat, et  
mundus

mundus per ipsum factus est, et mundus e-  
um non cognovit. In propria venit, et sui  
eum non receperunt. Quotquot autem rece-  
perunt eum, dedit eis potestatem filios dei fa-  
eri, his, qui credunt in nomine eius: Qui  
non ex sanguinibus, neque ex voluntate car-  
nis, neque ex voluntate viri, sed ex Deo na-  
ti sunt. Et Verbum caro factum est, et ha-  
bitavit in nobis: Et vidimus gloriam eius,  
gloriam quasi unigeniti a patre, plenum gra-  
tia et veritatis.

V. Domine exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

Oratio.

**D**omine Iesu Christe, qui dedisti Apostolis  
tuis virtutem et potestatem super in-  
firmos et languores, ut infirmos curarent;  
Mortuos suscitarent; Leprosos mundarent;  
Dæmones ejicerent: Confirma in me hanc gra-  
tiam, quamvis indignus, et miser peccator  
sum: Et non respicias ad innumerabilia pec-  
cata mea: Sed sicut consuevisti peccatorum  
misereri, et preces humilium exaudire, prop-  
ter magnam misericordiam tuam, ita me nunc  
exaudire digneris: Et sicut exaudisti Lacro-  
nem in Cruce, ita me nunc exaudire digne-  
reris clamantem ad te contra istum spiri-  
tum verantem hunc famulum tuum. P. ut  
in nomine sancto tuo terribili, ipsum expel-  
lere valeam: Qui cum Patre et Spiritu  
Sancto vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculorum,  
Amen.

N u m b.



## NUMB. VII.

*The Ceremonies for the Healing of them that be Diseased with the King's Evil, as they were practised in the Time of King Henry VII.*

First, The King, kneeling, shall begin and say,

**I**n nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

And so soon as he hath said that, he shall say,

**Benedicite.**

The Chaplain kneeling before the King, having a Stole about his Neck, shall answer and say.

**Dominus sit in corde tuo et labiis tuis, ad confitendum omnia peccata tua, In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.**

Or else to say,

**Iesus nos exaudiat, In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.**

Then by and by the King shall say,

**Confiteor Deo, Beate Mariæ Virgini, omnibus Sanctis, et vobis, quia peccavi nimis in cogitatione, locutione et opere, mea culpa. Precor Sanctam Mariam, omnes Sanctos Dei, et vos orare pro me.**

The Chaplain shall answer and say,

**Miserereatur vestri omnipotens Deus, et demittat vobis omnia Peccata vestra, liberet vos ab omni malo, salvet et confirmet in bono, et ad vitam perducatur æternam. Amen.**

**Absolutionem et Remissionem omnium peccatorum vestrorum, spatium veræ poenitentiae, et emendationem vitæ, gratiam et consolatio-**

nem Sancti Spiritus, tribuat vobis omnipotens et misericors Dominus. Amen.

This done, the Chaplain shall say,

**Dominus vobiscum.**

The King shall answer,

**Et cum Spiritu tuo.**

The Chaplain,

**Sequentia Sancti Evangelii secundum Mar-**  
**cum.**

The King shall answer

**Gloria tibi, Domine.**

The Chaplain shall read the Gospel.

**I**n illo tempore: Recumbentibus undecim  
discipulis apparuit illis Iesus: Et expo-  
nabit incredulitatem eorum, et duritiem cor-  
dis: quia iis, qui viderant eum resurrexisse,  
non crediderunt. Et dixit eis; euntes in  
mundum universum, predicatē Evangelium  
omni creaturæ. Qui crediderit et Baptizatus  
fuerit, salvus erit: qui vero non crediderit,  
condemnabitur. Signa autem eos, qui credi-  
derint, hæc sequentur; in nomine meo dæmo-  
nia ejicient: linguis loquentur nobis: ser-  
pentes tollent: et a mortiferum quid biberint,  
non eis nocebit: Super agros manus impo-  
nent, et bene habebunt.

Which Clause, *Super agros, &c.* the Chaplain re-  
peats as long as the King is handling the Sick  
Person. And in the time of the repeating the a-  
foresaid Words, *Super agros, &c.* the Clerk of  
the Closet shall kneel before the King, having  
the Sick Person upon the Right Hand; and the  
Sick Person shall likewise kneel before the King:  
And then the King shall lay his Hand upon the  
Sore of the Sick Person. This



This done, the Chaplain shall make an end of the Gospel; and in the mean time the Chirurgeon shall lead away the Sick Person from the King.

**Et Dominus quidem Iesus, postquam locutus est eis, assumptus est in coelum, et sedet a dextris Dei. Illi autem profecti, predicaverunt ubique, Domino cooperante, et sermonem confirmante, sequentibus signis.**

Then the Chaplain shall begin to say again,

**Dominus vobiscum.**

The King shall answer,

**Et cum Spiritu tuo.**

The Chaplain,

**Initium Sancti Evangelii secundum Joannem.**

The King shall say,

**Gloria tibi Domine.**

The Chaplain then shall say this Gospel following.

**I**n principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum. Hoc erat in principio apud Deum. Omnia per ipsum facta sunt. Et sine ipso factum est nihil, quod factum est: In ipso vita erat, et vita erat lux hominum: Et lux in tenebris lucet et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt. Fuit homo missus a Deo, cui nomen erat Joannes. Hic venit in testimonium, ut testimonium perhiberet de lumine, ut omnes crederent per illum. Non erat ille lux, sed ut testimonium perhiberet de lumine. Erat lux vera quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum.

Which last Clause, *Erat lux vera, &c.* shall still be repeated so long as the King shall be Crossing the Sore of the Sick Person with an Angel Noble, and the Sick Person to have the same Angel hanged about his Neck, and to wear it until he be full whole.

This done, the Chirurgeon shall lead away the Sick Person as he did before; and then the Chaplain shall make an end of the Gospel.

**In mundo erat, et mundus per ipsum factus est, et mundus eum non cognovit. In propria venit, et sui eum non receperunt. Quotquot autem receperunt eum dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri, his, qui credunt in nomine ejus: qui non ex sanguinibus, neque ex voluntate carnis, neque ex voluntate viri, sed ex Deo nati sunt. Et Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis: et vidimus gloriam ejus, gloriam quasi unigeniti a Patre, plenum gratiae et veritatis.**

Then the Chaplain shall say,

**Sit nomen Domini Benedictum.**

The King shall answer,

**Ex hoc nunc et usque in seculum.**

Then shall the Chaplain say this Collect following, praying for the Sick Person or Persons.

**Domine exaudi orationem meam.**

The King shall answer,

**Et clamor meus ad te veniat.**

**Oremus.**

**O**mnipotens sempiternus Deus, salus aeterna credentium, exaudi nos pro famulis tuis, pro quibus misericordiae tuae implozamus aux.



auxilium, ut reddita tibi sanitate, gratiarum tibi in Ecclesia tua referant actiones. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

This Prayer is to be said secretly after the Sick Persons are departed from the King, at his pleasure.

**D**ominato? Domine Deus Omnipotens cuius benignitate, cæci vident, surdi audiunt, muti loquuntur, claudi ambulant, leprosi mundantur, omnes infirmorum curantur languores, et a quo solo donum sanationis humano generi etiam tribuitur et tanta gratia pro incredibili tua erga hoc regnum bonitate, Regibus ejusdem concessa est, ut sola manuum illorum impositione, morbus gravissimus foetidissimusque depellatur, concede propitius ut tibi propterea gratias agamus, et pro isto singulari beneficio in nos collato, non nobis ipsis, sed nomini tuo assidue gloriam demus, nosque sic ad pietatem semper exerceamus, ut tuam nobis donatam gratiam non solum diligenter conserbare, sed in dies magis magisque adaugere laboremus, et præsta, ut quorumcunque corporibus, in nomine tuo manus imposuerimus hac tua virtute in illis operante et nobis ministrantibus, ad pristinam sanitatem restituantur, eam conserbent, et pro eadem tibi, ut summo medico et omnium morborum depulso, perpetuo nobiscum gratias agant: Sicque deinceps vitam instituant ut non corpus solum ab infirmitate, sed anima etiam a peccato omnino sanata videatur. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Sancti Spiritus per omnia secula seculorum. Amen.

Num.

## NUMB. VIII.

*The Ceremonies used in the Reigns of King Charles the First and Second, at the times of Touching for the cure of the Kings Evil.*

**T**HE Chaplain thus begins: *The Gospel written in the 16 Chapter of St. Mark, at ver. the 14. Jesus appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and cast in their teeth their unbelief, and hardness of heart, because they had not believed them which had seen that he was risen again from the dead. And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to all creatures, he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned: all these tokens shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out Devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall drive away serpents. And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them. They shall lay their hands on the Sick and they shall recover.* The which saying is continued between every healing of his Sacred Majesty, till all the Sick be Touched by him; the which being finished, the Chaplain goes on.

*When the infirm Persons are presented to the King on their Knees, the King lays his hands upon them.*

*So when the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received into Heaven, and is at the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with miracles following. The which done, he begins the Gospel written in the First Chapter of St. John, verse the First.*

**I**n the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word, the same was in the beginning with God;



God; all things were made by it, and without it was nothing made which was made: in it was life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shined in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. There was sent a man from God, whose name was John, the same came as a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light.

Here the Chirurgions come up the second time, making their three Obeisances as formerly, where the Clerk of the Closet on his Knees doth deliver to the King his Gold ready strung upon a white Silk Ribband, and when these following words come to be read, the King puts over the Gold.

**That light was the true light, which lightneth every man which cometh into the world.**

Here the diseased are presented to the King, and the King puts the Gold about their Necks.

This running through the whole course of the Ceremony, which words are continually repeated between every one which receives the Gold. This being finished, these following words are read:

**He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not, he came amongst his own, and his own received him not: but as many as received him, to them he gave power to be made sons of God: even them that believed on his Name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor yet of the will of man, but of God: And the same word became flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we saw the glory of it, as the glory of the only begotten son of the Father, full of grace and truth.**

This

This being finished, the Chaplains, with the rest of the People, on their Knees, do pronounce the following Prayers.

Verf. Lord have mercy upon us.

Resp. Lord have mercy upon us.

Verf. Christ have mercy upon us.

Resp. Christ have mercy upon us.

Verf. Lord have mercy upon us.

Resp. Lord have mercy upon us.

Then the Chaplains read the Lord's Prayer, viz.

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

*These answers  
are made by  
those that come  
to be healed.*

Verf. O Lord save thy Servants.

Resp. Which put their trust in thee.

Verf. Send help unto them from above.

Resp. And evermore mightily defend them.

Verf. Help us O God our Saviour.

Resp. And for the glory of thy name deliver us, and be merciful to us Sinners for thy names sake.

Verf. O Lord hear our Prayers.

Resp. And let our cry come unto thee.

Then the Chaplain reads this Prayer following.

**O** Almighty God, who art the giver of all health, and the aid of them that seek to thee for succour. We call upon thee for thy help and goodness, mercifully to be shewed to these thy Servants, that they being healed of their infirmities, may give thanks to thee in thy holy Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Here he concludes.

**T**HE Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen.

*In the late Queen's Reign these Ceremonies received some Alteration, but they having been Printed in some Editions of the Common Prayer Book, I refer the Reader to them.*